



The HHSA Connection

THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

MAY 2007

Health Link Public Health Nurses Make a Difference

Health Link Public Health Nurses (PHNs) are often the face of the Agency in the communities of San Diego County. They are on the front lines of health education and collaboration with community partners.



The Agency has six Health Link nurses - one assigned to each region. These PHNs work with communities and Agency partner organizations to tailor health education programs to the needs of their individual regions.

"We've done assessments of our communities and focus our efforts on those individual communities," said **Bea Moniz**, North Inland Health Link PHN.

"I get a lot of community requests, especially from schools, and give a lot of presentations on nutrition," said **Lupe Flores**, North Coastal Health Link PHN. "I also belong to a whole slew of collaboratives."

The story is the same for Central Region's **Shahla Abtahi-Sepah**. "It's really a collaborative effort with our community partners," she said.

The nurses work with community partners extensively and do many presentations to schools and groups. They also do home visits with individuals.

"We get a very good reception," said Moniz. "They really use us as a resource."

Although the regions have their own individual focuses, there is a common element running through them: the County's fight against childhood obesity.

In the East, Health Link PHN **Laura Carter** said the community is welcoming the message about childhood obesity and juvenile diabetes.

-- continued on Page 2



*From left, Walter Philips, Executive Director, San Diego Youth and Community Services, County Supervisor **Greg Cox** and Agency Director **Jean Shepard** cut the ceremonial ribbon.*

Agency Opens First Deaf Foster Youth Group Home

The Agency was a big part of the partnership that opened the first group home for Deaf foster youth in Southern California. The home will house up to six foster youth between the ages of 12 and 18 who are Deaf or hard of hearing. The new home will allow these youth to stay in the county, closer to families and friends.

The four-bedroom home has been renovated to meet the needs of the youth. Hardwood floors will resonate with vibrations that can be heard when someone enters a room. A TTY phone, text messaging devices and a video phone will allow residents to communicate with family and friends. The home is also equipped with a strobe light system to indicate when individuals are ringing the doorbell and entering or leaving the home, and when the smoke alarm is activated.

All of the staff working in the home will be fluent in American Sign Language and most of the staff will be Deaf or hard of hearing.

For more photos from the Deaf Group Home opening, please see page 5.

Thanks to all employees that donated during the recent County Blood Drive. The final count was 557 pints!

A Message from Jean M. Shepard

*Health and Human Services Agency
Director*

Good things happen when people work together. There are many Agency programs and projects that rely on the efforts of both Agency staff and community partners.



When it comes to serving our foster youth, San Pasqual Academy stands out as a great example of what innovative thinking, hard work, determination and dedication by the Agency, our community partners and supporters can accomplish.

That same collaborative spirit has led to the opening of one of the few Deaf Foster Youth group homes in the country right here in San Diego County. The leadership and support of Supervisors **Greg Cox** and **Ron Roberts** helped move this from an idea to reality.

The concept began with the North Central Region Medically Fragile Unit. They identified this need and have worked so hard to make this home a reality. The involvement of community partners including local businesses, civic groups and members of our Deaf community was critical.

There are many ways in which having a locally based facility will better serve our Deaf children. Most importantly, the Deaf Group Home will make it much more likely that a Deaf foster youth will reunify or maintain contact with his or her family.

We have a strong record in San Diego County of providing innovative and first-rate services to our foster youth, and the Deaf Group Home is one more example of that commitment in action.

Jean M. Shepard

Health Link Nurses, continued from page 1

"On a community level, the East Region collaboratives are really concentrating on better nutrition," she said. "We have kids whose blood sugar is out of control. All the school districts here are looking at classroom snacks and lunchroom choices."

Martha Garcia, who is brand new to her Health Link position in the South Region, says that region is no different than the others when it comes to nutrition and obesity. "There is definitely an issue with childhood obesity that we see."

"Everything we do has its roots in these issues," said Abtahi-Sepah.

Flores has been working with the Oceanside schools on an after-school program to combat juvenile diabetes. She has also been doing health fairs and a lot of home visits to educate both parents and children.

"Public Health is a bigger picture," said Central Region's **Shahla Abtahi-Sepah**. "Change is slow. Change in practices and beliefs takes time."

In the North Inland Region, Moniz is working with fifth- and sixth-graders in Ramona and Julian assessing Body Mass Indexes and blood sugar levels with follow-up education. The program has been so successful it will be rolled out to other schools in the region.

In fact, a lot of the work the Health Link PHNs do is with school nurses. "We meet with school nurses and disseminate information," said Moniz. "We act as consultants for school nurses."

No matter the region and no matter the issue, the Agency's Health Link PHNs are working with both groups and individuals in our communities trying to create positive changes in lifestyles.

"I work in the field trying to make a difference for individuals," said Abtahi-Sepah. "Hopefully we can make a change."

FUELING LITERACY BY SHARING BOOKS

Many youth involved in the juvenile justice system struggle academically. Although poor school attendance plays a part in the underachievement of this population, a larger issue may be that these students never fully mastered reading. Juvenile facilities are making reading materials available as a cornerstone of their educational programming.

To improve the future of literacy in the San Diego juvenile justice community, the Polinsky Children's Center, in collaboration with the San Diego County Probation Department and the Honorable Susan Huguenor of the Superior Court, created a book sharing program. They decided that used books offered by the public as donations to Polinsky would be redirected to Probation for use in their county-wide facilities. In addition, duplicate books donated to Polinsky will be made available to Probation and San Pasqual Academy.

Since that decision, hundreds of books have been made available to Probation, San Pasqual Academy and Superior Court clients that have enhanced their reading literacy opportunities.



CCS's San Diego South Medical Therapy Unit hosted a Family Fitness Fair for clients and their families. See the story on Page 4.

Foster Youth Mentor Program Celebrates County Volunteers

The Child Welfare Services Foster Youth Mentor Program is dedicated to enhancing the lives of San Diego's foster youth. Assisting a youth with issues of self-esteem, academic excellence, goal setting, responsibility and independent living skills is a gift not only to the youth but to the community as well. The program has evolved over the years into a highly successful mentoring opportunity that provides committed, trained adult mentors to foster youth ages 6 -18 throughout the county.

Currently, there are 218 mentors working with 247 foster youth in San Diego County. Thirteen of the mentors are active county employees and two are retired employees. With immeasurable generosity and selflessness, these volunteers share their time and talent to improve our community and help some of our community's most vulnerable residents - San Diego's youth.

The Foster Youth Mentor Program is currently collaborating with the San Diego County Office of Education, Foster Youth Services program to enhance the services we can provide to foster youth. Through this collaboration, mentors working with youth 15 years and older receive expert assistance to address the youth's educational needs. We also receive referrals for potential mentors from Children Uniting Nations and most recently, Miles Ahead Mentoring Alliance.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, please contact **Jannette Kutchins** at (858) 503-2626.

Director's Call-In

Share your ideas and concerns with
HHSA Director **Director of Operations**
Jean M. Shepard **Paula Landau-Cox**

First Friday of each month • 8 a.m. - noon
(619) 515-6555

Emergency Survival Program

There are many resources available to help you. For example, the [County's Office of Emergency Services](#) offers an Emergency Survival Program (ESP) with monthly tips to increase emergency preparedness at home, in the community, at work and at school.

The May theme is "Public Health Emergencies."

[The County's emergency page](#) will provide valuable information in the event of a disaster.



IRC Helps Provide Transition For Youths

For the more than 300 youth who leave the foster care system each year, preparing for the transition into adulthood requires planning.

Social workers have a resource at their disposal to assist youth in making decisions regarding housing, education and career. It's called the Independent Readiness Conference (IRC).

The IRC provides a forum of discussion on future plans, both short and long-term. A variety of options are discussed and prioritized into Plan A, Plan B and so on.

Youth have the opportunity to invite their circle of support, which may include mentors, Court Advocates, parents and foster parents.

The IRC is the transition point on the youth's Independent Living Skills (ILS) journey. Typically, conferences are held when the youth is 17 1/2 years of age, allowing time to meet application deadlines for housing, educational and career options.

ILS services are provided for eligible youth from age 16 to 21. The ILS Contractor is introduced to the youth at the IRC. From that point on, the ILS case management changes from the ILS social worker to the contractor. In San Diego County, ILS contracts with San Diego Youth and Community Services (SDYCS), YMCA and South Bay Community Services.

Social workers referring youth for an Independent Readiness Conference can contact Special Services Supervisor, **Rhonda Sarmiento**, (619) 767-5446.

Compliance Office:
(619) 515-4244

Toll-Free Compliance Hotline:
(866) 549-0004

An ethical workplace is your right... and your responsibility...



Everyone had a great time at the CCS Family Fitness Fair.

CCS Family Fitness Fair

Disabled children from the San Diego South Medical Therapy Unit and their parents and siblings participated in a Family Fitness Fair organized by California Children Services (CCS) occupational and physical therapists on April 2 at the Gompers High School campus.

Parents attended nutrition and fitness presentations by community-based agencies, while the children participated in recreational activities such as parachute games, hand-cycle rides and wheelchair relays. Additionally, families were treated to healthy refreshments, along with the opportunity to visit display tables for information on community resources.

The CCS Medical Therapy Unit is a special program of the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency that provides occupational therapy and physical therapy for children with eligible conditions such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida, muscular dystrophy and spinal cord injuries.

This particular Medical Therapy Unit serves primarily Latino families, which statistics show have higher rates of childhood obesity and related conditions such as Type II Diabetes, than the general population.

The Family Fitness Fair was an opportunity to engage community partners in promoting health and wellness to CCS clients and their families.

"It's How We Live" Visits Lakeside

The "It's How We Live" health fair and Lakeside Unified School District's Run for the Arts took place at Lindo Lake Park and was attended by 1300 people. The health fair was organized by County Parks and Recreation Department in collaboration with HHSA East Region, Lakeside Unified and local non-profit organizations.

There were over 50 information and activity booths including: healthy cooking demonstrations, rock climbing, bounce houses, and performances by local school students. Both young and old enjoyed health screenings ranging from Body Mass Index, physical and mental developmental assessments, dental, glucose, and blood pressure checks.

Aging and Independence Services' project coordinator, **Kathy Holmes Hardy** had 300 people stop by, eager to learn more about the services available for older adults. Public Health Nurses **Laura A. Carter**, **Pam Besaw**, **Dorothy Greco**, and **Bobbi Howland** completed 150 blood pressure checks and engaged more than 60 kids in a very creative and innovative nutrition game aimed at raising awareness about the dangers of unhealthy food choices. PHNs reported 500 visitors at their booth.

Neighborhoods For Kids (N4K) staff **Dehl Lorenzo**, **Karen Wimmer** and **Karen Barch** attracted 400 people to their table. The N4K team talked with attendees about getting involved with efforts to keep kids in their neighborhood schools and community. With a positive attitude, teamwork, recognition and professionalism, East Region staff were able to present a combined service to the community at large.



The Neighborhood For Kids Booth.



*From left, highschool volunteers Tanya Quitugua and Moriah Carter; and Public Health Nurses **Laura Carter** (back), **Dorothy Greco**, **Pam Besaw** and **Bobbi Howland**.*

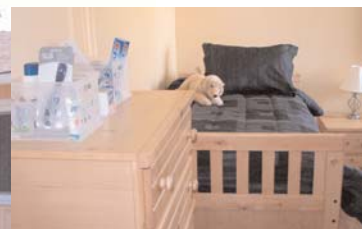


***Bobbi Howland** (PHN) and **Dehl Lorenzo**(CWS) at the blood pressure check during "It's How We Live" in Lakeside.*

More photos from the Group Home for Deaf Foster Youth Ribbon Cutting



Agency Director **Jean Shepard** delivers remarks at the ribbon cutting. The home, above; one of the bedrooms, top right; and the dining room, below right.



150 Years of Public Health

By **Dr. Wilma Wooten**, Interim County Public Health Officer

Public health deals with the health of populations, while medicine deals with an individual's health. Public health primarily addresses preventing disease, or the risk factors that cause certain diseases; promoting health activities; and protecting the public's health by monitoring the water, air, the environment, even animals, for agents that spread disease to humans.

The impact of public health and what it means to the daily lives of citizens usually goes unnoticed, but over the past 150 years, advances in public health have made a difference in the quality of life for San Diego County residents and the public nationwide.

The Agency's Public Health Services is reflecting on more than 150 years of public health milestones.

A child born in 1900 could expect to live into their late 40s, but by 2000 life expectancy doubled, to almost 80 years old. In the early 1900s, public health was more of a sanitation issue, and keeping the streets free of horse manure was a top concern. Today, Public Health is concerned with promoting health and well-being, prevention of disease and disability, and protecting the public's health.

In the late 19th/early 20th centuries, state and local public health departments primarily focused on issues related to infectious diseases and maternal and child health issues. In 1850, the San Diego Board of Health was established to combat epidemics of typhus, cholera and yellow fever. In 1857, the San Diego Board of Health was re-established to prevent the spread of small pox and other contagious diseases and the local population was just 798 people. By 1888, the population exploded to 30,000 people. Then, as now, people were attracted to San Diego County's mild weather and low pollution. In 1876, the first regular meetings of the Board are documented in the San Diego Union as the Board dealt with unhealthy conditions of water and sanitation.

Also in 1888, a San Diego Department of Health was established, and immediately tackled new health challenges resulting from the population boom, such as safe food and clean drinking water. The first annual report of the Board of Health emphasized smallpox vaccination, food safety along with sanitation concerns in jails and the county as a whole.

Back in 1900, nearly one in 100 mothers died of pregnancy-related complications. Thirty percent of infants died before their first birthday. In 2000, the population reached 2,813,833; one in 10,000 mothers died of pregnancy-related complications that year.

In 1910, heart disease emerged as the leading cause of death nationally and locally. Today, a major public health concern is the "Obesity Epidemic" affecting adults and children. In California, adult obesity reportedly causes an estimated economic burden exceeding \$21.7 million.

The County's public health system has weathered the "Spanish Flu" epidemic of 1918 (368 people killed locally), and seen advances in disease prevention including the polio, measles and Rubella vaccines.

Many of these events support significant achievements in public health. Some of the top achievements of the 20th century were:

- Vaccinations,
- Motor-vehicle safety,
- Safer workplaces,
- Control of infectious diseases,
- Decline in deaths from coronary heart disease & stroke,
- Safer and healthier foods,
- Healthier mothers and babies,
- Family planning, and
- Recognition of tobacco use as a health hazard.

Today's public health system must address an array of new challenges, including chronic diseases, mental health, substance abuse, traumatic injuries, and environmental and occupational health, not to mention recent concerns such as bioterrorism. Notably, events of 9/11 and the 2001 anthrax attacks have increased the visibility of public health, resulting in a focus on security issues. The future of public health will focus on new agendas, while preparing for coming epidemics. While past events and accomplishments in public health have improved the health of our nation, there are opportunities to make significant strides to address the health of the world.

The Agency offers a variety of services and resources in areas including:

- Tuberculosis Control and Refugee Health
- Immunizations
- Maternal, Child and Family Health
- Emergency Medical Services
- Epidemiology
- Chronic Disease (including Tobacco Control)
- HIV, Sexually Transmitted Diseases and Hepatitis

North Regions & Community Partners Hold Self-Sufficiency Rejuvenation

On March 27th, the Agency North Regions' Strategic Plan Initiative "Self-Sufficiency in Families & Individuals," hosted a community forum at Scripps Ranch Library to address goals, accomplishments and future directions for the Region.

The event, known as the "Self-Sufficiency Rejuvenation," brought together for the first time the two initiative committees (one in North Central and one in North Coastal/North Inland), which includes collaborative partners from the Health and Human Services Agency and community-based organizations.

The goals of the Rejuvenation were to re-focus self-sufficiency efforts and rejuvenate old and new members in working together. The agenda included a big picture overview of how the Initiative fits within the HHSA and County of San Diego Strategic Plans, and the value of the cross-collaboration with the North Regions' partners.

The Initiative co-chairs celebrated past successes, particularly those in the areas of Earned Income Tax Credit and Welfare-to-Work. The success story of Agency employee **Michelle Gregson**, who spoke about how she rose from welfare to self-sufficiency, was a highlight of the day.

Also inspirational was Hunger Coalition Coordinator's **Tia Anzelotti**'s speech on the "Keys to Self-Sufficiency: The Building Blocks to Success," where she spoke about how services that our partners provide help to lay the foundation for families to thrive.

Anzelotti went on to say that Food Stamp Outreach was the next key to families' sufficiency since it can provide families with additional support and resources. To assist the Initiatives with re-directing their focus to Food Stamp Outreach, facilitator Trudy Sopp discussed the power and influence of collaboration and coalition building with others, and engaged the group in a mind mapping activity and strategizing an action plan.

Wrapping up the day was North Regions Deputy Director **Nick Macchione**, who thanked the 60 partners attending the event for their commitment to leveraging their resources and helping the North Regions as a whole.



Rejuvenation attendees work on a mind-mapping exercise.



Strategic planning sessions facilitated discussions about the future for the North Central, North Inland and North Coastal Regions.



*Hunger Coalition Coordinator Tia Anzelotti (left) and **Michelle Gregson**, an Agency employee who shared her welfare to success story.*

MHS Celebrates Mental Health Month

May is Mental Health Month and HHSA's Mental Health Services division, together with several public and private partners, is sponsoring several activities and events to commemorate the month and promote the many mental health programs the County offers for children and adults.

For a full listing of the month's activities, visit the [County Mental Health Services' Network of Care website](#).

Some of the goals for Mental Health Month include:

- Celebrating the implementation of new mental health Community Services and Supports programs funded with Mental Health Services Act (Proposition 63) revenues;
- Planning for the Prevention and Early Intervention and Workforce Development components of the Act;
- Advocacy for policies to improve people's health and their quality of life;
- Public education and research to reduce the stigma of mental illness and advance the science of treatment and prevention;
- Full access to high-quality, culturally competent services focused on rehabilitation and recovery; and
- Developing the link between mental and physical health.

The Mental Health Services Act, approved by voters in November 2004, assures state funding to counties for expanded and innovative mental health programs. San Diego County identified needed services and, with community recommendations, developed new and expanded programs that have proven effective.



Behavioral Health administrators (l-r) Susan Bower, Acting Deputy Director for Alcohol and Drug Services; Alfredo Aguirre, Deputy Director for Mental Health Services; and Dr. Jennifer Schaffer, Deputy Director for Behavioral Health prepare to celebrate Mental Health Month.

DIVERSITY 101

This is the third in a series of information on diversity in the Agency.

Referrals to mental health services are available by calling the Access and Crisis Line at (800) 479-3339. Spanish speaking counselors are available most hours, and interpretation is available in over **140 languages** through language interpreting services.

Send in kudos!

Proud of a coworker?

Send text (and photos):

thomas.christensen@sdcounty.ca.gov

- or contact your section editor.



Chief Administrative Officer - Walter F. Ekard

Health and Human Services Agency Director - Jean M. Shepard

Board of Supervisors

Greg Cox, District 1
Dianne Jacob, District 2
Pam Slater-Price, District 3
Ron Roberts, District 4
Bill Horn, District 5

County of San Diego

Health and Human Services Agency

Editor - Tom Christensen

Section Editors

Aging & Independence Services: Denise Nelesen
Alcohol & Drug Services: Sabrena Marshall
Central Region: Elise Lorentz
Child Welfare Services: Cathi Palatella
East Region: Katie Judd
Financial & Support Services: Marion Morris

Mental Health: Martha Armenta
North Central Region, North Coastal Region,
North Inland Region: Nina Constantino
Public Health: Wilma Wooten
South Region: Angie DeVoss

National HIV Testing Day is June 27th

NATIONAL HIV

june 27

TESTING DAY

There is significant documentation to show that the life expectancy of individuals testing positive for HIV is almost two and a half decades.¹ Even for people diagnosed at later stages of AIDS, current treatments are providing them with as much as an additional fifteen years of life. This alone is cause to celebrate. This is a much different picture than was seen in the beginning of the epidemic when hearing the news that being HIV positive was the same thing as a death sentence.

Wednesday, June 27 is National HIV Testing Day. There will be a national "push" for people to find out their HIV status. As always, testing remains free and will be available at many sites around San Diego County. Since the beginning of the epidemic locally, over 13,000 men, women and children have been diagnosed with AIDS.

While determining or knowing one's HIV status is not the cure-all for this epidemic, this knowledge provides the necessary information needed for patients to make informed decisions about seeking health care. All of the County of San Diego testing sites offer referrals to HIV specialty primary care, partner notification and treatment options.

**Currently
there are approximately 15,000
individuals living with AIDS or HIV dis-
ease in the County of San Diego.
Unfortunately, an additional 3,500 people
do not know that they have been
infected.**

Here at the County of San Diego we are partnering with the Antiretroviral Center (AVRC) at UCSD Medical Center to bring Nucleic Acid Testing (NAT) to the populations most impacted by AIDS/HIV disease. This pilot program was started in February. Individuals at high risk for HIV infection coming in for testing at The Center and those who test negative are asked if they would like to participate in a study to determine if they are in the "window period" of the disease. If consent is given, a tube of blood is drawn and a NAT is performed. The results of the test are available within one week and are given in person to the tested individual. This highly sensitive test can determine early infection -- as early as one week.

**Approximately
40% of new cases are
spread because the infect-
ed partner did not know
their HIV status.**

The NAT system detects viral genes rather than antibodies or antigens (proteins from the virus). Detection of viral genes permits earlier detection. The approved test system can detect ribonucleic acid (RNA) from HIV-1, as well as Hepatitis C Virus (HCV). The NAT is currently used universally to screen blood donations for transfusion in the United States.²

The County's Office of HIV, STD and Hepatitis is also working on a grant with AVRC to expand this program to multiple sites in the County. Since studies have shown that those who know their HIV status are more likely to inform and protect their partners, it is believed that NAT testing has the potential for significant reduction in the spread of HIV. The number of lives that will be saved from HIV infection and the amount of money that will be saved from halting the spread of HIV will be evaluated by this program.

You can contact the County of San Diego HIV Counseling and Testing Program (619) 296-2120 to find the sites that are offering the NAT for HIV.

1. Medical Care - Abstract Volume 44 (11) November 2006, p. 990-997 The Lifetime Cost of Current Human Immunodeficiency Virus Care in the United States.

2. <http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/ANSWERS/2002/ANS01140.html>

BHS Participates in Walk for Recovery



Behavioral Health Services (BHS) staff participated in the 5th Annual California Walk for Recovery 3-Mile walk that was held March 25. Fifteen staff participated in the walk to support behavioral health services in our community.

The Walk route included festive entertainment, cultural and traditional music, marching bands, cheerleaders, bagpipes, fiestas, dancers, clowns and much more.

A Community Resource Expo was held from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. in which BHS staffed a booth, which provided Alcohol and other drug and Mental Health Services information.

Behavioral Health Services strives to be engaged with the community and provide important alcohol and other drug, and mental health resource information. For information regarding Behavioral Health Services available to you, please contact the Access & Crisis Line at (800) 479-3339.

Honoring Our Administrative Professionals



All San Diego County Administrative Professionals were honored at a Hollywood-themed appreciation event on April 25.

The event was put on by the Agency's Executive Administrative Professionals (pictured above) and featured a thank you from Agency Director **Jean Shepard**, Director of Strategic Planning and Operational Support **Dale Fleming** interviewing attendees as "Joan Rivers," and County Chief Administrative Officer **Walt Ekard** entertaining the crowd with an original song.

There were also giveaways and live entertainment.

Central Safety/Health Fair a Big Success

Over 500 bicycle helmets were fitted and given to children at the City Heights Urban Village Safety and Health Fair on April 21.

County Supervisor **Ron Roberts** and Agency Deputy Director **Rene Santiago** welcomed residents and promoted safe and healthy behaviors. In addition to free helmets one youth received a free bicycle in a raffle.

Public Health Clinic Social Service Aides **Lourdes Sandoval** and **Elizabeth Rodriguez** spoke to parents about the services available at the clinic. Many young mothers-to-be were also getting necessary information regarding their pregnancy. As a result of this outreach, moms have been calling the clinic to get more information and to be seen by the public health nurses.

Supervising Human Services Specialist **Jennifer Davis** and **Deni Gradwohl**, manager from the 73rd Family Resource Center, also conducted outreach. Medi-Cal health insurance and food stamp information was distributed and applications were provided to help with access to on-going care.

KidCare Express Mobile Medical Unit provided free glucose and cholesterol testing. This was a great opportunity to take advantage of preventative health care practices. Children were even able to take home a flowering plant from the County of San Diego Parks and Recreation.

The day was a huge success and a special big thank you to Supervisor **Ron Roberts** for providing the bicycle helmets and to City Heights Family Health Center for their sponsorship and organization of the event.



*From left, Central Region staff **Elizabeth Rodriguez** and her daughter; **Rene Santiago**; **Lourdes Sandoval** and her daughter; and **Deni Gradwohl** enjoy the Safety and Health Fair.*

Mira Mesa PHNs work with Community

Public Health Nurses (PHNs) can be found almost anywhere working to improve the health and quality of life for the people living in their communities. In Mira Mesa, it's no exception.

Quinn Savona and **Quynh Gredig** are Public Health Nurses at the North Central Public Health Center. It was due to their involvement with the local collaborative "Mira Mesa Stakeholders" that a community survey was conducted in Mira Mesa. The Stakeholder Group was interested in learning more about the community needs and how their group could reach out to meet those needs.

The PHNs, with the help of Point Loma Nazarene University nursing student intern Amanda Higginbotham, were instrumental in working with partnering agencies to develop and translate a survey instrument, obtain free give-aways, recruit surveyors, distribute questionnaires, and analyze the data.

Collaborative partners included Miramar College; Women, Infants, & Children; Mira Mesa Senior Center; Operation Samahan; Turning Point Pregnancy Resource Center; Harmonium; and Mira Mesa Town Council.

Four hundred and forty-four surveys were completed by residents of all ages during the Mira Mesa Street Fair in September 2006. The PHNs presented the results and recommendations at the Mira Mesa Town Council meeting in March 2007. To view the presentation, please click on this [Mira Mesa Community Assessment link](#).

MHS Participates in NAMI Walk



Mental Health Services staff participated in the annual San Diego County National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Walk.